

NOTICE OF INTENT

Department of Environmental Quality
Office of Environmental Assessment

Records Confidentiality/Increase in Penalty Fees
(LAC 33:I.503, 505, 507, and 705) (OS060)

Under the authority of the Environmental Quality Act, R.S. 30:2001 et seq., and in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950 et seq., the secretary gives notice that rulemaking procedures have been initiated to amend the Office of the Secretary regulations, LAC 33:I.503, 505, 507, and 705 (Log #OS060).

This proposed rule amends the regulations regarding the confidentiality of public records. Records processing, requests for confidentiality, and confidential information availability are clarified. This proposed rule also reflects an increase in the penalty fee for a major violation event and corrects the statutory maximum in circumstances where the penalty event constitutes a violation of a previous enforcement action. The increase in the penalty amount for environmental violations was enacted by Act 52 of the 2004 Regular Session of the legislature. The basis and rationale for this rule are to clarify the regulations regarding confidentiality of information obtained in public records and to correct the required amounts for penalty fees for environmental violations.

This proposed rule meets an exception listed in R.S. 30:2019(D)(2) and R.S. 49:953(G)(3); therefore, no report regarding environmental/health benefits and social/economic costs is required. This proposed rule has no known impact on family formation, stability, and autonomy as described in R.S. 49:972.

A public hearing will be held on October 25, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. in the Galvez Building, Oliver Pollock Conference Room C111, 602 N. Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Interested persons are invited to attend and submit oral comments on the proposed amendments. Should individuals with a disability need an accommodation in order to participate, contact Judith A. Schuerman, Ph.D., at the address given below or at (225) 219-3550. Free parking is available across the street in the Galvez parking garage when the parking ticket is validated by department personnel at the hearing.

All interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the proposed regulation. Persons commenting should reference this proposed regulation by OS060. Such comments must be received no later than November 1, 2004, at 4:30 p.m., and should be sent to Judith A. Schuerman, Ph.D., Office of Environmental Assessment, Regulation Development Section, Box 4314, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4314 or to FAX (225) 219-3582 or by e-mail to judith.schuerman@la.gov. Copies of this proposed regulation can be purchased by contacting the DEQ Public Records Center at (225) 219-3168. Check or money order is required in advance for each copy of OS060. This regulation is available on the Internet at <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/planning/regs/index.htm>.

This proposed regulation is available for inspection at the following DEQ office locations from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.: 602 N. Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802; 1823 Highway 546, West Monroe, LA 71292; State Office Building, 1525 Fairfield Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71101; 1301 Gadwall Street, Lake Charles, LA 70615; 201 Evans Road, Building 4, Suite 420, New Orleans, LA 70123; 111 New Center Drive, Lafayette, LA 70508; 110 Barataria Street, Lockport, LA 70374.

Wilbert F. Jordan, Jr.
Assistant Secretary

Title 33
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Part I. Office of the Secretary

Subpart 1. Departmental Administrative Procedures

Chapter 5. Confidential Information Regulations

§503. Requests for Confidentiality

A. - E.8. ...

F. All records submitted in accordance with R.S. 44:3.2 will be processed as a complete request for confidentiality as described in this Chapter.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 30:2030.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Environmental Quality, Office of the Secretary, LR 22:342 (May 1996), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Planning Division, LR 30:743 (April 2004), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, LR 30:**.

§505. Responses to Requests for Confidentiality

A. The department shall make a determination and send a written response to the requester by certified mail within a reasonable time from receipt of a complete request for confidentiality, except for:

1. ~~those~~ requests made in accordance with R.S. 30:2074(D), in which case the department shall send a written response by certified mail within 21 working days from receipt of ~~the~~ complete request for confidentiality; and

2. requests made in accordance with R.S. 44:3.2, in which case the department shall send a written response by certified mail within 30 days from receipt of the complete request for confidentiality.

B. - C. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 30:2030.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Environmental Quality, Office of the Secretary, LR 22:342 (May 1996), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Planning Division, LR 30:743 (April 2004), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, LR 30:**.

§507. Accessibility

A. Information that is confidential shall not be made available to the public.

BA. If a request for confidentiality is granted, such confidentiality shall not prevent the necessary use of the information or records by department employees or duly authorized officers or employees of local, state, or federal governments in carrying out their responsibilities under law. The secretary or the secretary's designee must duly authorize any officer or employee of local, state, or federal government who seeks access to confidential information or records.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 30:2030 and 30:2074.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Environmental Quality, Office of the Secretary, LR 22:343 (May 1996), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Planning Division, LR 30:744 (April 2004), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, LR 30:**.

Chapter 7. Penalties

§705. Penalty Determination Methodology

A. ...

Table 1. Penalty Matrix				
Degree of Risk/Impact to Human Health or Property	Nature and Gravity of the Violation			
		Major	Moderate	Minor
	Major	\$27,500 \$32,500 to \$20,000	\$20,000 to \$15,000	\$15,000 to \$11,000
	Moderate	\$11,000 to \$8,000	\$8,000 to \$5,000	\$5,000 to \$3,000
	Minor	\$3,000 to \$1,500	\$1,500 to \$500	\$500 to \$100

A.1. - D. ...

E. The information obtained from the violation-specific and violator-specific factors can be entered into one of the following formula(s) to obtain a penalty amount (P_n) for each penalty event:

$$P_n = A_n + (B_n \times [C_n - A_n])$$

$$P_n = 2(A_n + [B_n \times (C_n - A_n)]) *$$

where:

P_n = penalty amount for a given penalty event.

A_n = the minimum value of the penalty range for the cell located on the penalty matrix for a given penalty event.

B_n = the sum of percentage adjustments calculated for a given penalty event, where 100 percent $\geq B \geq$ -100 percent.

C_n = the maximum value of the penalty range for the cell located on the penalty matrix for a given penalty event.

* [NOTE: The statutory maximum is ~~double~~ \$50,000 in circumstances where the penalty event constitutes a violation of a previous enforcement action as stated in R.S. 30:2025(E)(2).]

F. - J. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 30:2050.3.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Environmental Quality, Office of the Secretary, LR 25:658 (April 1999), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Planning Division, LR 25:2400 (December 1999), LR 30:421 (March 2004), amended by the Office of Environmental Assessment, LR 30:**.

**FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

LOG #: OS060

Person

Preparing

Statement: O. C. SmithDept.: Environmental QualityPhone: 225-219-3985Office: Office of the Secretary

Return

Address: DEQ
P.O. Box 4303
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4303

Rule

Title: Records Confidentiality/Increase in
Penalty Fees (LAC 33:1.503, 505,
507, & 705)

Date Rule

Takes Effect: Upon promulgation**SUMMARY**

(Use complete sentences)

In accordance with Section 953 of Title 49 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes, there is hereby submitted a fiscal and economic impact statement on the rule proposed for adoption, repeal or amendment. THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS SUMMARIZE ATTACHED WORKSHEETS, I THROUGH IV AND WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE LOUISIANA REGISTER WITH THE PROPOSED AGENCY RULE.

I. ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COSTS (SAVINGS) TO STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS (Summary)

There are no expected implementation costs or savings to state or local governmental units.

II. ESTIMATED EFFECT ON REVENUE COLLECTIONS OF STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS (Summary)

No significant effect on revenue collections of state or local governmental units is anticipated. However, whenever major violations of environmental law warrant the assessment of civil penalties at the maximum rate, the department will receive approximately an 18% increase for those collected penalties.

III. ESTIMATED COSTS AND/OR ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO DIRECTLY AFFECTED PERSONS OR NON-GOVERNMENTAL GROUPS (Summary)

Major violators of environmental law may be assessed an increase in civil penalties.

IV. ESTIMATED EFFECT ON COMPETITION AND EMPLOYMENT (Summary)

There is no effect on competition and employment by the proposed rule.

Signature of Agency Head or Designee

Legislative Fiscal Officer or Designee

Wilbert F. Jordan, Jr., Assistant Secretary

Typed Name and Title of Agency Head or Designee

Date of Signature

Date of Signature

LFO 03/09/2001

**FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

The following information is requested in order to assist the Legislative Fiscal Office in its review of the fiscal and economic impact statement and to assist the appropriate legislative oversight subcommittee in its deliberation on the proposed rule.

- A. Provide a brief summary of the content of the rule (if proposed for adoption, or repeal) or a brief summary of the change in the rule (if proposed for amendment). Attach a copy of the notice of intent and a copy of the rule proposed for initial adoption or repeal (or, in the case of a rule change, copies of both the current and proposed rules with amended portions indicated).

This rule clarifies the confidentiality of information requested in the regulations. This rule also increases the penalty fee of a major violation and corrects the statutory maximum in circumstances where the penalty event constitutes a violation of a previous enforcement action.

- B. Summarize the circumstances which require this action. If the Action is required by federal regulation, attach a copy of the applicable regulation.

This rule is necessary to correct and clarify provisions in the regulations. Also, it adopts the required increase in the penalty amount for environmental violations enacted by Act 52 of the 2004 regular legislative session.

- C. Compliance with Act 11 of the 1986 First Extraordinary Session
(1) Will the proposed rule change result in any increase in the expenditure of funds? If so, specify amount and source of funding.

The proposed rule will not result in any increase in the expenditure of funds.

- 2) If the answer to (1) above is yes, has the Legislature specifically appropriated the funds necessary for the associated expenditure increase?

- (a) ____ Yes. If yes, attach documentation.
(b) ____ No. If no, provide justification as to why this rule change should be published at this time.

This provision is not applicable.

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**WORKSHEET****I. A. COSTS OR SAVINGS TO STATE AGENCIES RESULTING FROM THE ACTION PROPOSED**

1. What is the anticipated increase (decrease) in costs to implement the proposed action?

COSTS	FY 04-05	FY 05-06	FY 06-07
PERSONAL SERVICES			
OPERATING EXPENSES			
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES			
OTHER CHARGES			
EQUIPMENT			
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-
MAJOR REPAIR & CONSTR.			
POSITIONS (#)			

2. Provide a narrative explanation of the costs or savings shown in "A.1.", including the increase or reduction in workload or additional paperwork (number of new forms, additional documentation, etc.) anticipated as a result of the implementation of the proposed action. Describe all data, assumptions, and methods used in calculating these costs.

This does not apply.

3. Sources of funding for implementing the proposed rule or rule change.

SOURCE	FY 04-05	FY 05-06	FY 06-07
STATE GENERAL FUND			
AGENCY SELF-GENERATED			
DEDICATED			
FEDERAL FUNDS			
OTHER (Specify)			
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-

4. Does your agency currently have sufficient funds to implement the proposed action? If not, how and when do you anticipate obtaining such funds?

Current funding of the department is adequate for implementation of this proposed rule.

B. COST OR SAVINGS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS RESULTING FROM THE ACTION PROPOSED.

1. Provide an estimate of the anticipated impact of the proposed action on local governmental units, including adjustments in workload and paperwork requirements. Describe all data, assumptions and methods used in calculating this impact.

No implementation cost or savings to local governmental units are expected as a result of this proposed rule.

2. Indicate the sources of funding of the local governmental unit which will be affected by these costs or savings.

This does not apply.

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**WORKSHEET****II. EFFECT ON REVENUE COLLECTIONS OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS**

- A. What increase (decrease) in revenues can be anticipated from the proposed action?

REVENUE INCREASE/DECREASE	FY 04-05	FY 05-06	FY 06-07
STATE GENERAL FUND			
AGENCY SELF-GENERATED	Minimal increase	Minimal increase	Minimal increase
RESTRICTED FUNDS*			
FEDERAL FUNDS			
LOCAL FUNDS			
TOTAL			

*Specify the particular fund being impacted.

- B. Provide a narrative explanation of each increase or decrease in revenues shown in "A." Describe all data, assumptions, and methods used in calculating these increases or decreases.

An estimate of the number of future major environmental violations that warrant the maximum civil penalty is not feasible.

III. COSTS AND/OR ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO DIRECTLY AFFECTED PERSONS OR NONGOVERNMENTAL GROUPS

- A. What persons or non-governmental groups would be directly affected by the proposed action? For each, provide an estimate and a narrative description of any effect on costs, including workload adjustments and additional paperwork (number of new forms, additional documentation, etc.), they may have to incur as a result of the proposed action.

Major violators of environmental law may be assessed an increase in civil penalties.

- B. Also provide an estimate and a narrative description of any impact on receipts and/or income resulting from this rule or rule change to these groups.

No impact on receipts or income to directly affected persons is expected as a result of this proposed rule.

IV. EFFECTS ON COMPETITION AND EMPLOYMENT

Identify and provide estimates of the impact of the proposed action on competition and employment in the public and private sectors. Include a summary of any data, assumptions and methods used in making these estimates.

No effect on competition and employment is expected as a result of this rule.